



# Persuading the Bear

## Engaged Communities through Horizontal Influence

### Signature Talk – PMI Minneapolis

Michael Nir  
President Sapir Consulting with:  
Collaborative Leadership Team



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## The Disengagement Pandemic

- If attaining high employee engagement has become one of the most important ambitions of leadership, why is it that our practices appear to be doing more harm than good?
- What's causing 7 in every 10 workers to disengage and under-commit themselves at work?
- **Dismal Employee Engagement Is a Sign of Global Mismanagement**


*- Jim Harter, Ph.D., is Chief Scientist, Workplace Management and Well-Being at Gallup.*




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## Disengagement Impacts the Bottom Line



- **Inflicts Pain and Unhappiness**
- **High turnover**
- **Reduces profit per share!**



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## Michael Nir, Engaged Communities – Horizontal Influence



**President Sapir Consulting US**

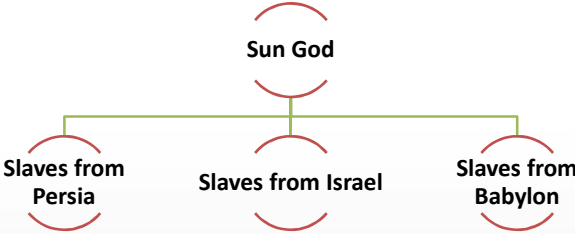

- ✓ **20 years experience**
- ✓ **Recurring Patterns**
- ✓ **Successful organizations embrace horizontal influence structures – engaged communities**
- ✓ **Unsuccessful organizations promote vertical influence patterns – disengaged communities**




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### Vertical Influence Paradigm Relevant for 5,000 years...Not Anymore



- **Command and Control power structures kill collaboration**



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### Unsuccessful Organizations - Disengaged Communities - Vertical Influence



- **Win Lose**
- **Kills Collaboration**
- **Surviving Digital Disruption Requires a Different Collaborative Model**



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### Unsuccessful Organizations - Disengaged Communities - Vertical Influence



**Life in a Matrix**  
www.lifeinamatrix.com

I'M LOOKING FOR HELP ON THIS, VIRTUAL TEAM...

VIRTUAL TEAM MANAGER

Function Country Product Group

IT'S NOT IN MY P & L. IT'S NOT IN MY OBJECTIVES. I'D LIKE TO HELP, BUT...

Traditional silos getting in the way?

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### Successful Organizations - Engaged Communities - Horizontal Influence



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# How Organizations Falter & Kill Engagement – and what you can do about it!

Hint – change your influence pattern



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## Example: Team Level Agility – Promotes Engaged Community – Horizontal Influence



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Then We Try to Scale

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Imposing Vertical Influence

Tribe

Tribe

Tribe lead

PO

PO

PO

PO

Chapter

Chapter

Guild

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### Unsuccessful Organizations Adopt Vertical Influence Resulting in Disengaged Communities

Manager

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### Eradicate the Disengagement Pandemic

**How to Create Engaged Communities?**  
**Successful Organizations?**  
**Inspire Horizontal Influence!**

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## Horizontal Influence – Building Great Things Together




- We build engaged communities through influence
- I acknowledge you as a human being
- We move away from hostile interactions and aggressiveness
- To purposeful cooperation and collaboration



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As an individual contributor – you engage a community by changing influence patterns from vertical to horizontal

As a manager/leader you empower dyads and triad engagement

Horizontal Influence without authority consists of four building blocks




The diagram features a central red diamond with the word "Community" inside. Four labels are positioned around the diamond: "Situation" at the top, "Strategy" on the left, "Perception" on the right, and "Decision" at the bottom. The entire diagram is set against a background of a large, stylized blue and white circular graphic.

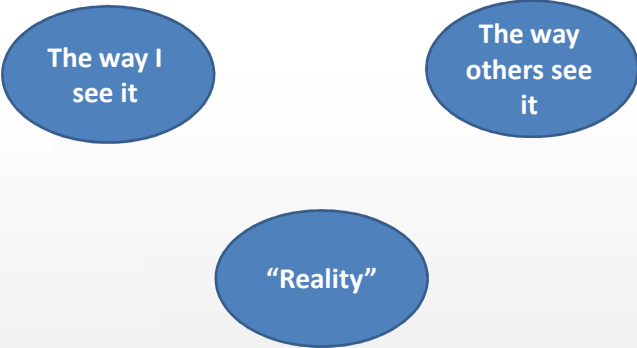
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# 1. Understanding the Situation



**How do I understand the situation?**



The diagram consists of three overlapping blue circles. The top-left circle is labeled "The way I see it". The top-right circle is labeled "The way others see it". The bottom-center circle is labeled "Reality". The circles overlap in the center, suggesting that individual and external perceptions converge on a shared reality.



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# Unsuccessful Organizations Focus on Stakeholder Management!

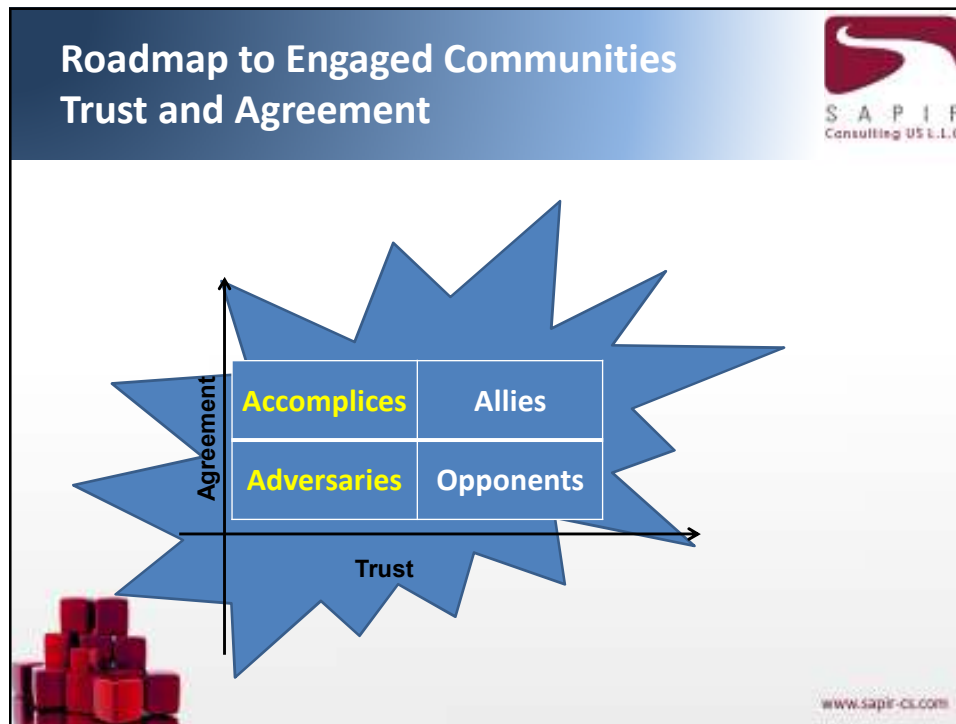


The matrix is a 2x2 grid with "Power" on the vertical axis (Low to High) and "Interest" on the horizontal axis (Low to High). The quadrants are: Top-Left (High Power, Low Interest): "Keep Satisfied" with point A; Top-Right (High Power, High Interest): "Manage Closely" with point H; Bottom-Left (Low Power, Low Interest): "Monitor (Minimum Effort)" with point D; Bottom-Right (Low Power, High Interest): "Keep Informed" with point E. Points B and C are also marked in the top-right and bottom-right quadrants respectively.

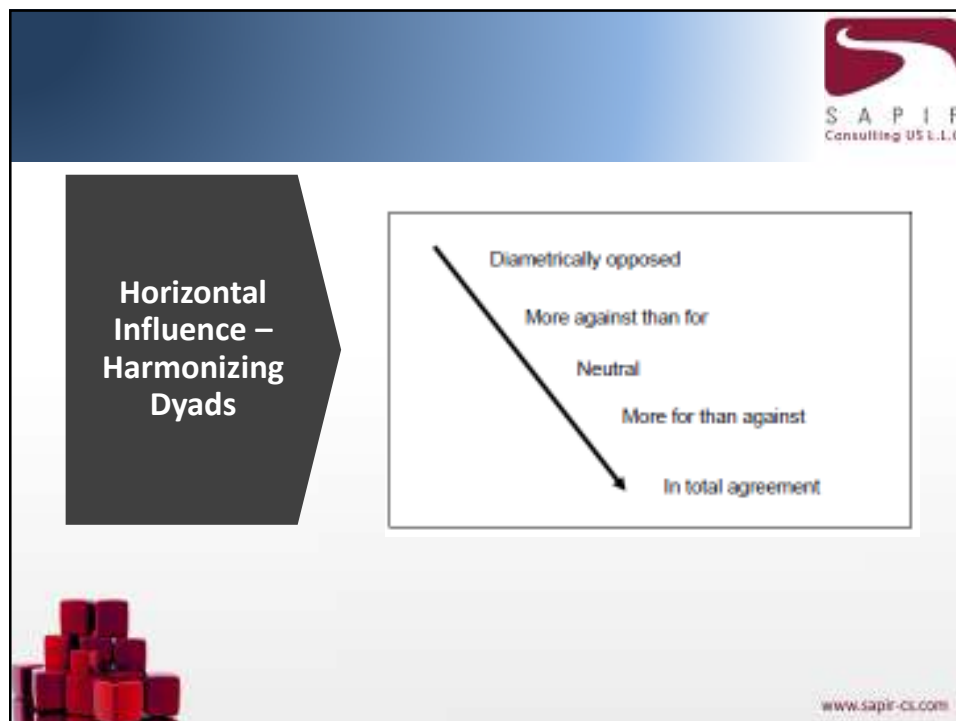


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## Engaged Communities Horizontal Influence – Situation (1)



- ✓ **Communities are built when we take the time to observe the engagement patterns in a given situation**
- ✓ **When we appreciate the others for who they are rather than fit them in small boxes**
- ✓ **Listen to understand**

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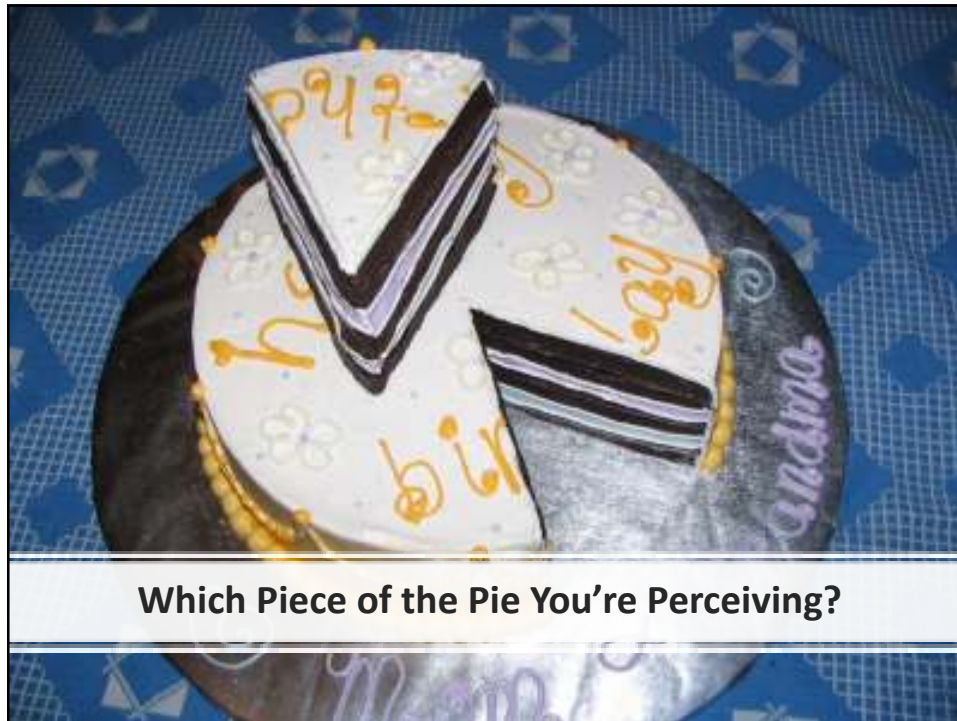
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## 2. Transforming our Perception

What I believe in, how I perceive it, how I think that others perceive it/me


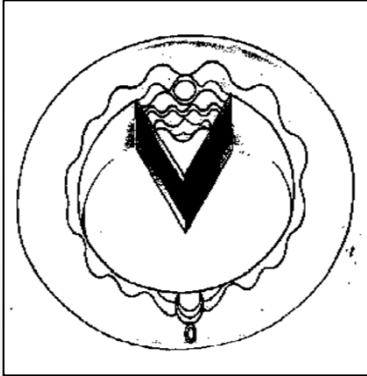

- Create a persona – someone you dislike working with and need to work with
- Once completed – write down 5 words that summarize the persona communication and influencing style

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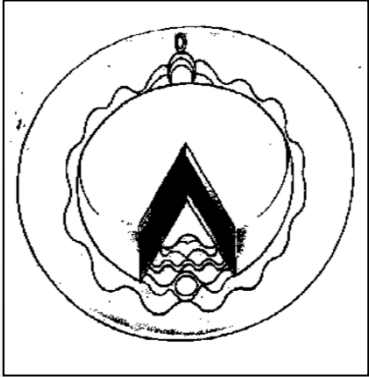

What is Important to You?




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## What do You Perceive is Important to Them?



How Does It Impact How You'll Influence Them?



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## Successful Organizations Moving Away from Patterns

**These 5 words!**

- Emotional
- Pattern
- Projecting
- The You in them

**Horizontal Influence is enabled when we move from these words**

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## Increasing Freedom Enables Horizontal Influence

- How we provide excuses for ourselves
- How we blame others
- Review the Persona – identify 3 ‘environmental excuses’
- How can we – how can you – how can I?

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## Engaged Communities Horizontal Influence – Perception (2)

- ✓ We try to influence from our own Gestalt/being
- ✓ We impose our own perceptions on those that we find the hardest to share our values with
- ✓ Your worst enemy to influencing others is yourself – Let Go (remember the persona exercise)
- ✓ View with fresh eyes – invigorate rather than reduce

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## Persuading the Bear? A Story of Influence



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## Conflicting Directions How To Influence a Bear



### If You Encounter a Bear

- **Do not run**  
Running may elicit a chase response. Bears can run faster than 30 mph (50 km/hr). You cannot outrun them. If the bear is unaware of you, detour quickly and quietly away. Give the bear plenty of room, allowing it to continue its activities undisturbed. Back away slowly if the bear is aware of you. Speak in a low, calm voice while waving your arms slowly above your head. Bears that stand up on their hind legs are not threatening you, but merely trying to identify you.
- **Hold your ground**  
Should a bear approach or charge you, do not run, do not drop to your pack. Bears sometimes charge, coming within ten feet of a person before stopping or veering off. Dropping a pack may encourage the bear to approach people for food. STAND STILL until the bear moves away, then slowly back off.
- **Play dead if contacted by a grizzly**  
If a grizzly makes contact with you, play dead. Curl up into a ball with your knees tucked into your stomach and your hands laced around the back of your neck. Leave your pack on to protect your back. Statistically, most grizzly bear attacks are short, defensive reactions by grizzlies feeling threatened by you. However, if the attack is prolonged, fight back vigorously.
- **Fight back against black bears**  
If a black bear makes contact with you, fight back. Their charges are less likely to be a bluff.

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## Don't Eat Me



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## So Similar to Our Situations...



**If You Encounter [Redacted] Bill or Lauren from Finance**

- **Do not run**  
Running may elicit a chase response. [Redacted] can run faster than 30 mph (50 km/hr). You cannot outrun them. If the [Redacted] is unaware of you, detour quickly and quietly away. Give the [Redacted] plenty of room, allowing it to continue its activities undisturbed. Back away slowly if the [Redacted] is aware of you. Speak in a low, calm voice while waving your arms slowly above your head. [Redacted] that stand up on their hind legs are not threatening you, but merely trying to identify you.
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## 3. Exploring Decisions



**How much do I need to move away from my comfort zone,  
from behaviors that I am comfortable with**

**Examples of Energy / Style / Behavior**


- **Push and Pull**
- **Which does the persona use**
- **Which do you use**



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## Push Persuading




**Proposing – “I propose ...”, “I suggest ...”, “It would be a good  
idea if ...”**

**Consider whether to use the active or the passive tense  
depending on the seniority of those involved, i.e. passive  
tense**

**“The circumstances suggest this is the better approach....”**


**Reasoning - “For the following two reasons...”**



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## Push Asserting




**What you like / want / need.**

**Explore the difference between the use of the three different terms:**

- “I would like you to do ...”
- “I want you to do ...”
- “I need you to do ...”


Each have a different tonality – so consider how you use them, e.g. “I need you to ...” is quite strong, so use that less frequently, when it is your intent to be strong.



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## Push Asserting



**Explore use of “I”, use of pause for dramatic impact - most people have the urge to fill a silence - and increase the pressure to comply with the request.**

**Direct Feedback**


- “I like the way ...”
- “I don’t like the way ...”



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## Push Asserting




**Incentive**

“If you do this, then I will ...”

Consider that recognition of an individual and their importance in the team can be a significant incentive.


Listening carefully so you establish their needs and find a way to meet that need.



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## Push Asserting




**Pressure**

“I see you need xyz, so if you do this I will be able to give you xyz”

“I need this to happen. If it does not happen, then x will be the consequence ...” (Pressure)

A very powerful form of this is consequence assertion. Where you state consequences that will occur if something doesn't happen.


**Always Consider Cultural Implications**



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## Pull Involving




**Encouraging**

Use of people names if appropriate

General good open questions to get a group's views; use of names to get an individuals view, use of 3-step approach


- Tell Me
- Explain to me
- Describe to me



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## Pull Involving




**Sharing Feelings**

You can express feelings directly and when used appropriately can be powerful, as they are often left unsaid.

Articulating your feelings can get people to respond well, particularly if linked to gestures.

E.g. "I feel helpless" (said with hands open, palms facing the individual) is a more submissive gesture that 9 times out of 10 will ensure the individual helps you! Clearly to be used sparsely, but can be effective in breaking a deadlock and gaining a concession.



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## Pull Inspiring



**Painting a picture**  
Use metaphors, stories, real life examples etc where you cannot use a literal visual or paint a picture with words easily

**Common interests**  
Summarize in particular words said with feeling as these often give the best clue to the person's real agenda.


- Repeat the last words...
- Summary of the idea in your own words



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## Pull Involving



**Listening**


Paraphrasing and reflection. Allow time for the talker to adjust what they have said in response you your reflection.



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## Reduce – Withdrawing



**Disengaging**  
Cup of tea, break, adjourning a disciplinary after hearing the facts for 24 hours to take time to check them out

**Opting out**



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## Away from Comfort Zone


What words / phrases should I use?  
Am I comfortable using them?

Can I combine the Push/Pull strategy with the Level of 'enthusiasm' barometer?


Can I combine the Push/Pull strategy with the specific group I am influencing?

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## Talk With Your Dyad



- **Think of yesterday meetings – what did you say**
- **How did you say it?**
- **What were the results – can you improve them?**



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## Engaged Communities Horizontal Influence – Decision (3)




- ✓ **We have multiple options to communicate and influence**
- ✓ **However often we tread the same path – worn out by decades of use – our neural paths dictate?!**
- ✓ **Tomorrow – use a different strategy – revel in that – build influence through personal change – create with**



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## 4. Chose Engaging Strategy

- **Communication patterns drive our influence strategies**
  - The words I use limit/structure my influence approach
- **We select similar words with wide audiences**
- **What if we created Collaboration Clouds instead?**

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## Secret to Engaged Communities Listen More, Argue Less



**What we talk about when we talk?**

- **People spend a lot of speech time simply letting the other person know that they are listening**
- **Conversation is co-operation!**
- **Language functions as a tool to create new realities, in the case of conversation – it's a social bonds**
  - ❖ **Economist – February 16<sup>th</sup> 2019**

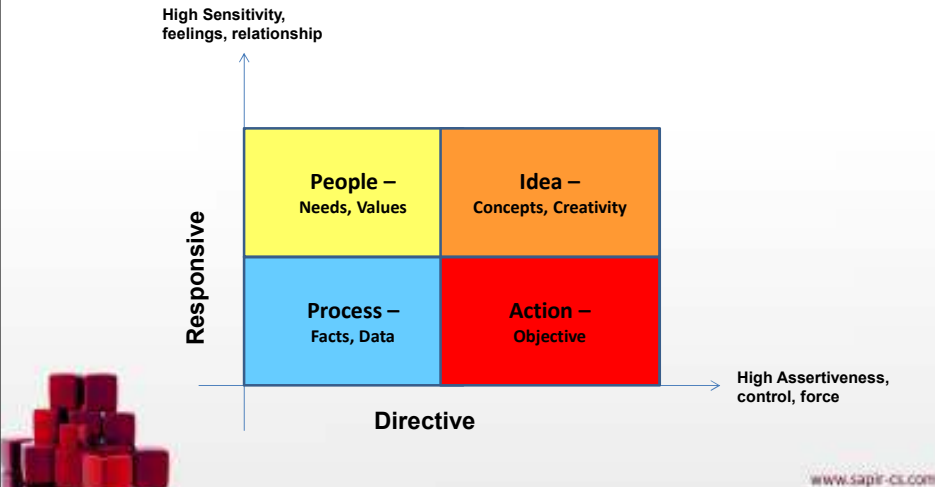



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## Adapt Your Influence Style Engaged Community Building



High Sensitivity, feelings, relationship

Responsive

People – Needs, Values

Idea – Concepts, Creativity

Process – Facts, Data

Action – Objective

Directive

High Assertiveness, control, force

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## People Style – Building Understanding





- **Energy – moving with, empathetic**
- **Actions – sharing, listening**
- **Outcome – understanding**
- **Key words – people, needs, sensitivity, relationships, beliefs, co-operation, team spirit**
- **Cultures – Asia, Japan, social professions, HR, health and education**



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## Idea Style – Building Cooperation


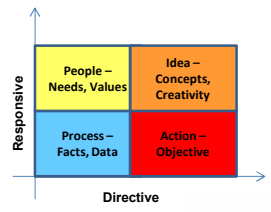



- **Energy – moving together, inspiring**
- **Actions – connecting, envisioning**
- **Outcome – cooperation**
- **Key words – concepts, innovation, potential, creativity, possibilities**
- **Cultures – France, R&D, project leadership, younger generation (why are we doing it, asking questions as a norm)**

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## Process Style – Building Solutions



- **Energy – moving at, debating**
- **Actions – proposing, reasoning**
- **Outcome – solution**
- **Key words – facts, details, procedure, observation, proof, planning, analysis**
- **Cultures – central Europe, engineering, accounting, oil and chemicals, government, manufacturing, pharma**

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## Action Style – Building Deal



Responsive ↑	People – Needs, Values	Idea – Concepts, Creativity
	Process – Facts, Data	Action – Objective
	Directive →	


- Energy – moving against, bargaining
- Actions – demanding, exchanging
- Outcome – deal
- Key words – results, objectives, performance, deals, challenges, decisions
- Cultures – US, Australia, sales, retail, consumer goods, senior managers




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## Horizontal Influencing– the Z Model

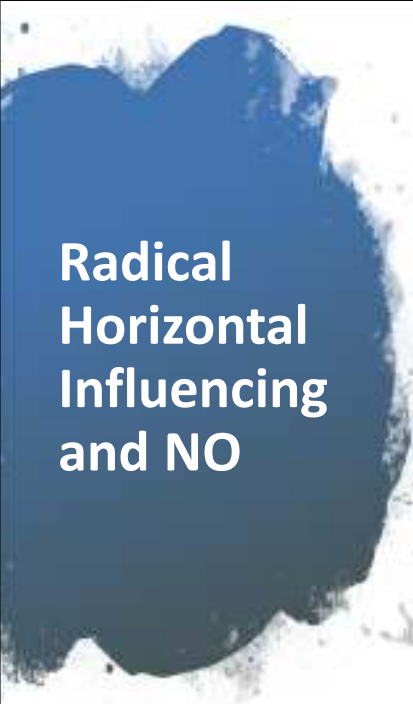


```
graph TD; A[Agree the facts – Process] --- B[Work out what logic suggests – Process]; B --- C[Discuss the different possibilities – Idea]; C --- D[Check out potential people's reactions – People]; D --> E[Recommend a course of action – Action]
```



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## Radical Horizontal Influencing and NO

- Drive for empathy – create trust
- Mirror mirror on the wall – repeat words, use body language
- Label the feelings – call them out
- Summarize to get to a “that’s right”
- Use questions to uncover - “How am I supposed to do that”
- Use biases to your advantage
- Ignore; use ‘AND’, say that’s interesting, say I am curious to understand

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## Radical Horizontal Influencing – Lab Practice



- Find a new partner to collaborate with;
- Offer a tough scenario from your work environment / social and debrief your partner;
- Ask them to play the role of the person you’re going to influence (in the real world);
- Practice the scenario – select one of the concepts from the pervious slide – at least 4-5 minutes;
- Take a minute to write down how it was for you – share with the partner and ask for feedback.

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**NO – last thoughts**



**No – opens up opportunities**

**Use smartly**



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**What Makes Agile So Dangerous –  
it Drives Horizontal Influence – Threatening the Unsuccessful Organizational**

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**What Can You Do?  
Horizontal Influence to Engaged Community**

**Listen and Respond**  
Ask, invite, build trust

Horizontal Influence is the antidote to command and control power, use your influencing power!

Engage with our experimental community – Chickens Learn Lean <http://bit.ly/learnlean>

Join my workshop  
For list of strategies text 617.991.4253  
Email: michael@michaelnir.com

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**Last 2019 thoughts...**

**To solve the challenges of tomorrow we  
need to stop using the tools of  
yesterday!**

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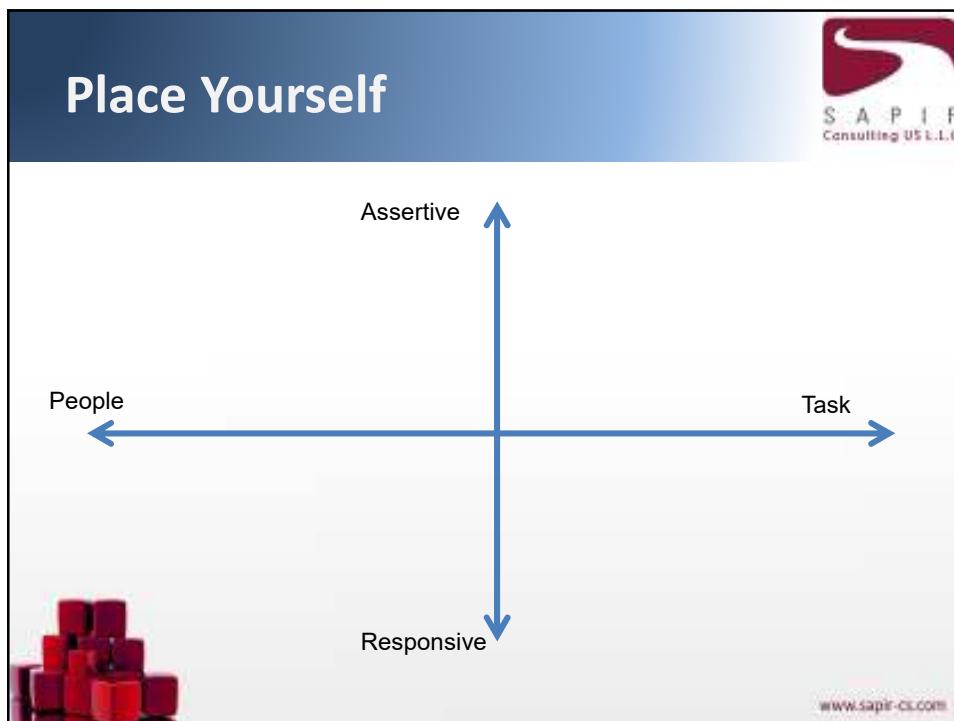
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Connect with Michael  
LinkedIn  
[michael@michaelnir.com](mailto:michael@michaelnir.com)


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## Influencing



**INFLUENCING IS – The effect of one person or thing on another and the power of a person to have such an effect.**


**This is about someone or something swaying our way of thinking through our behaviors, position, etc,**



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## Persuading



**PERSUADING IS – To induce, urge or prevail upon successfully. To cause to believe. To convince through reason.**

**This is about our ability to convince others to our way of thinking through our reasoning or argument**



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~~Why~~ **How Organizations  
Murder Agile?**



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**Agile  
is code word for  
Collaboration**



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# How Organizations Kill Collaboration?

Discuss with a partner:  
How does your org kill collaboration?



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# They Hire Managers




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**Discuss With A Person  
Across the Room**



**What are strategies  
you use to influence  
when you lack  
authority?**



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